

**Kentucky Adult Education Advisory Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**April 13, 2007**

**The following members attended:**

Bill Bates, Vicki Boyd, S.J. Brennan, Patty Craig, Cris Crowley, Kathryn Hardman, JoEllen Mitchell, Brenda Morris, Julie Scoskie, Lisa Stethen, Bill Teegarden, Bev Thomson, Jonell Tobin, Rocky Wallace and Sugar Willey.

**The following members did not attend:**

Sarah Hornback and Margenia Keeton.

**KYAE staff in attendance:**

Sarah Hawker, Reecie Stagnolia, B.J. Helton, Janet Hoover, Sandy Kestner, Marilyn Lyons, Terry Pruitt, David Walters, Joyce Bullock, Martha Fightmaster, Linda Pankratz, Donna Potter, Billy Crabtree, D.J. Begley, Faith Cirre, Ashley Smither and Ginny Sullivan.

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Sarah Hawker discussed her first year at KYAE. Information gathered from meetings with local adult education providers and a review of state performance data pointed to the need to renew the focus on quality adult education services.

In 2000, the Task Force on Adult Education placed a much-needed priority on enrollment in order to get more people into adult education programs. Seven years later, we felt it was time to look at where we are to see if we are still on the right track. We heard a consistent message from local providers that, as the system moved toward quantity, we started losing ground on qualitative areas, such as learning gains, student retention, and GED attainment.

A look at data confirmed local providers concerns. Kentucky's National Reporting System (NRS) numbers have decreased. Fewer people are staying in programs 12 or more hours. The average number of hours a student spends in a Kentucky program is 49 hours compared to the national average of 109 hours. For the first time, Kentucky Adult Education did not meet federal performance goals. This means Kentucky will not receive federal incentive funding. Another clear indicator pointing to a need for change is that, while Kentucky as a state didn't meet the NRS performance goals, 84 counties qualified for state incentives based upon program performance.

She reported KYAE staff have spent the past six to eight months reviewing components of the adult education system -- analyzing data and gathering input through internal and external work groups, focus groups and this committee -- to develop a new framework for adult education. Ms. Hawker asked members to put aside individual programmatic concerns and to view the framework as a statewide model focusing on increasing benefits to students and the entire Commonwealth.

## **New Framework for Adult Education**

Sarah Hawker outlined major components of a new framework for adult education:

- Lower enrollment goals for every county
- Increased emphasis on quality outcomes to qualify for “incentives”
- Expanded rewards for quality through new performance funding
- Family literacy will be optional
- Corrections will be based on local need
- 2007-08 funding at least level with current budgets
- 2007-08 is a “transitional” year – no sanctions for not meeting goals
- GED ceremonies and refreshments for student-related activities!!!

## **Data**

The current funding formula is based upon Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey literacy levels and county-level data based upon the 1997 Current Population Survey. Kentucky paid \$750,000 to have a new state literacy report produced and an additional \$250,000 to receive county-level data. While the State Assessment of Adult Literacy is very useful, the embargoed county-level literacy report is not useable. The methodology that produced the county-level percentages in the below basic and basic categories changed and the credibility interval is so broad that KYAE would be irresponsible to use it. For example, one county had 16% of the population in the below basic category with a credibility interval of 30 points, so the true percentage of below basic could be anywhere from 1% to 45%. Instead of five literacy categories, there are now four levels, with below basic and basic reflecting the two lowest levels. The basic category blended those without a high school diploma with those who have a high school diploma and some college. Since the research agency did not provide a crosswalk, we can't pull out the adult education target population.

Marilyn Lyons reviewed over 100 different education data websites and ran numbers on various age categories of individuals without a high school diploma. KYAE has elected to use the 2000 U.S. Census data of adults 18 and older without a high school diploma as the target population. Census data is reliable, other government organizations use it, and we have the ability to do trend analysis. We elected not to use the Current Population Survey or the American Community Survey, since the sampling size is smaller and we cannot get the county-level data. While KYAE does serve 16-17 year olds, data on 16-17 year olds without a high school diploma isn't available. If 16-17 year olds were included, that number would also include all 16-17 year olds still in school.

Sarah Hawker noted the federal funding formula is based upon U.S. Census data.

Kathryn Hardman suggested using a county's graduation rate rather than dropout rate to determine how many 16 and 17 year olds are eligible to be served. AERIN can tell us how many we are serving, but the graduation rate can tell us how many are eligible to be served.

Julie Scoskie reported the 16 and 17 year old age group is Jefferson County's fastest growing population and would like KYAE to consider counting 16 and 17 year olds. B.J. Helton noted GED numbers have not increased for that age group.

Reecie Stagnolia indicated there are 785,000 adults 18 years and old without a high school diploma. The previous statewide target population statistic from the Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey was nearly 1 million adults functioning at the two lowest levels of literacy.

Julie Scoskie asked how programs count individuals with high school diplomas and some advanced degrees who come to programs for ESL services. Marilyn Lyons indicated as will be discussed later, those individuals were taken into consideration as well as immigration and migration status.

### **Core Services Grant Funding**

Reecie Stagnolia noted KYAE has made a commitment to have core services funding at least at the current level for the upcoming fiscal year. Beginning in FY 2008, core services will integrate ABE/GED, corrections education, workplace education, family literacy and ESL into one county allocation with programs determining how much to spend in each area. He noted, we have an additional \$2 million appropriated to put into the formula this year. When running county allocations based upon 2000 Census data, there will be some funding shifts based upon population shift.

KYAE has identified 31 counties that will receive lower funding with implementation of the new funding formula based upon the 2000 Census data. KYAE will implement a three-year phase-in of the new funding formula for those counties funded above the formula amount. The first year will be at least the same as the previous year, with a gradual percentage decrease over the next two years. It will give the impacted programs three years to plan new strategies and reprioritize resources.

The reasons a county's funding could decrease is that the eligible population declined from 1990 to 2000 or the population increased from 1990 to 2000, but at a lower rate than other counties. For example, when the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) used the 2000 Census data in its funding formula, Kentucky's federal funding decreased. While Kentucky's population increased, it did not increase at the same rate as other states.

Other notable funding changes include a line item for food and GED ceremonies, and an increase in the minimum funding amount for a county from \$50,000 to \$60,000.

It was noted that the Council on Postsecondary Education has begun budget development and is supportive of KYAE efforts to seek additional funding for adult education. If advocacy efforts are successful in securing additional funding for adult education, this will help to offset the impact of the funding shifts on individual programs.

Julie Scoskie reported that the Kentucky Association for Adult and Continuing Education is working with KYAE staff to plan a Fall Institute focusing on advocacy.

Julie Scoskie requested KYAE consider having funds available for transition to postsecondary education services. Jefferson County participated in a transition pilot project funded with additional money. When the pilot ended, the funding stopped, but Jefferson County still serves that population.

Members requested enrollment goals and funding information be released as soon as possible in order to give programs sufficient time to adjust and plan for the upcoming year. Members suggested it would be better to release information prior to the regional meetings so that people have time to react and are better equipped to discuss changes at the regional meetings. Members reiterated a need for immediate notification to the 31 counties who are funded above the new funding formula amount.

### **Enrollment Goals**

Reecie Stagnolia indicated that, traditionally, adult educators try to be all things to all people. The Enrollment and Outcome Workgroup spent many hours in discussion and came to embrace as a core business statement the need to focus on services that elevate the education level of eligible individuals living or working in Kentucky by providing academic instruction leading to measurable outcomes such as a GED and postsecondary education preparation. He outlined several compelling reasons for change.

- The average number of participation hours has dropped from 54 hours to 49 hours as compared to the national average of 114 and 113 hours respectively. Only three states ranked lower than Kentucky in hours of participation.
- The number of GEDs earned declined 28 percent from 2000 to 2006. All states experienced a decline upon introduction of the new GED test in 2002, but while other states' GED numbers are approaching pre-2002 levels, Kentucky's numbers are still declining. Kentucky issued 9,750 GEDs in 2005 and 9,007 GEDs in 2006. The number of GEDs issued as a percentage of the target population is less than 2 percent, which is similar to the national average. Kentucky ranks 50<sup>th</sup> nationally in the percentage of persons 16 and older without a high school diploma.
- The percentage of students transitioning to postsecondary education decreased from 22 percent to 21 percent.
- In 2001, of the 51,177 total enrollments, 37,071 (72 percent) were NRS (12 hours or more) enrollments; there were 0 assessments. In 2006, of the 126,548 total enrollments, 30,983 (24 percent) were NRS enrollments; there were 44,000 assessments. Of the 30,983 NRS enrollments in 2006, only 14,163 (45 percent) completed a level and only 18,000 (59 percent) had both pre- and post-tests.

These statistics all point to the need for change.

Kentucky has been successful in getting people into the education pipeline, but many are leaking out of holes in the pipeline. KYAE staff began asking how do we plug the holes, stop the leakages, retain our students and provide instructional services of appropriate duration and intensity to move the state's "education needle."

JoEllen Mitchell suggested KYAE provide this foundational data in writing at the upcoming regional meetings.

The state's 2007-08 enrollment goal will be 70,000, down 44 percent from the 2006-07 enrollment goal of 125,000. This goal will be distributed across counties based upon the 2000 U.S. Census target population data. A decreased enrollment goal will allow programs to embrace students committed to achieving their goals rather than "chasing enrollments."

There are changes in which types of enrollments will count toward a county's enrollment goal.

- Corrections education students and workplace education students served with core service funds will count toward the county's enrollment goal.
- Individuals for whom the GED Official Practice Test (OPT) is the only service provided will count toward the county's enrollment goal.
- With exception of the "OPT only," a program may only count those enrollments where instructional services are provided. All other "assessments only" will no longer count toward the county's enrollment goal.

Reecie Stagnolia noted that, while KYAE has not set county-level GED or transition goals, we want people to be aware of the decline and understand that CPE has set goals for KYAE to meet for each. There will be no sanctions for not meeting the 2007-08 enrollment and performance goals, since KYAE needs to determine an appropriate baseline for the new Framework.

The next step, phase three, for the Enrollment and Outcome Workgroup will be to look at the KYAE accountability policy and student performance funding.

Julie Scoskie again asked how to count those students who seek our services while already possessing a high school diploma. This will be discussed later.

Cris Crowley noted 2007-08 could be the year where you get "out of the box" and try new things, because there are no sanctions.

Reecie Stagnolia advised the committee that KYAE will issue a competitive request for proposal for 2008-09. For 2008-09, expect to only be able to count those students with 12 or more hours of participation. While the 12-hour minimum is a federal standard, it is in actuality very minimal. We recognize the need to develop intensity and duration strategies and deal with teacher quality issues as we work to change the mind-set from

chasing enrollments to meet enrollment goals to an educational program with quality enrollments and services.

Senate Bill 1 requires KYAE to have an efficient, responsive system that delivers quantity and quality that significantly elevates the educational level of the state. We've got to keep people in the pipeline and get them through to the other end in order to move the educational needle of the state.

Julie Scoskie advised the committee that Jefferson County has been looking at managed entry and is happy to have the opportunity to try new strategies. She noted, however, if we move completely to a managed-entry system, we could develop wait list challenges.

Sarah Hawker said if programs experience wait lists, we need to be conscientious about collecting the data. Julie Scoskie suggested that AERIN be revised to capture these data at the state level.

Reecie Stagnolia noted David Walters and the Program Support Team are there to help programs work through the challenges and obstacles of change. David Walters added we are in it with you navigating the change with you.

Brenda Morris advised KYAE should be aware that not everyone will complete a structured, managed program.

In order to take full advantage of the 2007-08 transition year, Kathryn Hardman suggested KYAE immediately develop handouts on model programs from which local programs could chose. She also requested KYAE provide the GED passing rate per program and indicated it would be a wake up call for a lot of programs.

JoEllen Mitchell added this is important information she shares with her staff.

B.J. Helton noted the GED passing rate data is only as good as the data recorded on the GED demographic form and hopes to have the latest passing rate information available by June 30.

Sarah Hawker reported that the Developmental Education Task Force suggested adult educators give a feedback report to local high schools on local students' TABE and GED scores. Brenda Morris noted she tested high school seniors and gave feedback to schools.

### **Family Literacy**

Janet Hoover outlined changes to family literacy programming. Family literacy will be optional. Programs will determine whether they will or will not offer family literacy services. Those who opt not to offer family literacy will be required to submit a new Scope of Work outlining how they will utilize the staff and funding formerly earmarked for family literacy as it is now part of the base funding.

There will be no family literacy goal even if you choose to offer family literacy. Family literacy students will count toward the county's enrollment goal.

There will be a way to earn performance funds on family literacy students.

Janet Hoover advised the committee that the definition of family literacy will not change. Family literacy will be comprised of four components – adult education, PACT, parenting and child education. Programs that elect to offer family literacy services might want to consider offering a three-month summer program in order to run a high quality, intensive program, based upon community need, with the hopes of retaining the adult education student after the family literacy program ended.

Sarah Hawker reported KYAE staff met with Kentucky Institute for Literacy (KIFL) staff to discuss these recommendations. KIFL agreed if we have fewer, but higher quality programs, it is the right thing to do and were excited to discuss ways to strengthen our partnership.

In the past, KIFL has handled professional development and technical assistance. In 2007-08, KIFL will no longer handle technical assistance. While Donna Potter will remain KYAE's lead family literacy staff person, KIFL will train all KYAE program support associates who will provide program support assistance to local programs. KIFL will develop a new Family Literacy Handbook illustrating four family literacy program models, such as a managed-entry or a three-month program. KIFL will also develop a DVD of best practices for PACT and parenting time. KIFL will provide family literacy professional development and training for local program staff, but will revamp the training to include the new program models.

### **Corrections Education**

David Walters outlined major changes in Corrections Education. Corrections funding will be integrated into the core services grant. There will be no funding set-aside and no corrections enrollment goals. It will be a local decision to determine the level of service.

While there will be no funding set-aside, programs need to tell KYAE when invoicing how much money has been used to provide corrections education services. There is a maximum limit on the amount of federal funding that may be used for corrections education. Once KYAE reaches the maximum federal limit, KYAE will support the remainder of the year's corrections education services with state funds.

KYAE staff will be meeting with the Department of Corrections leadership to make sure they support the program changes and will continue to pursue having local jails keep inmates long enough for them to reach education goals rather than moving inmates around so frequently. KYAE also hopes to gain support for more incentives at the state level for GED attainment while incarcerated.

Kathryn Hardman asked that KYAE request the Department of Corrections make sure those eligible for services can access the services.

Bill Bates asked for a clarification on whether federal or state funds will be used for corrections education. He noted a concern with fringe benefits for those paid with federal funds versus state funds. KYAE will use federal funds. If the federal maximum is reached, KYAE will let programs know of the switch to state funds.

Cris Crowley asked if a local program should pursue a formal memorandum of understanding with local jails. David Walters and Reecie Stagnolia agreed it would be a good idea, to demonstrate clear understanding by both parties of what will be provided.

### **Workplace Education**

Sarah Hawker noted workforce education is part of our mandate. KYAE struggled over the workforce education services and were glad to finally arrive at consensus.

B.J. Helton outlined four types of workforce education programs.

- Any workforce training of less than 6 hours duration will be funded through the Workforce Alliance. KYAE will streamline the process for accessing Workforce Alliance funding.
- Short-term workplace learning, 6-11 hours in length, funded through core services, will have a pre-assessment to determine eligibility and must contain an academic component – math, reading, or writing. It can be coupled with soft skills, i.e., communication and team building. At least 75 percent of the class must be eligible for adult education services, and there must be a written agreement with the employer specifying what services will be delivered.
- Workplace training of a longer duration, 12-30 hours, funded through core services, must have a pre- and post-assessment. There must be an academic component and can be coupled with soft skills training. At least 75 percent of the class must be eligible for adult education services and there must be a written agreement with the employer. Students in this category will be both KYAE and NRS reported enrollments.
- Adult basic education in the workplace has no time limit for the 2007-08 transition year, but beginning 2008-09, there will be a 12-hour minimum. There must be a pre- and post-test reported in AERIN. As noted previously, beginning in 2007-08, “assessments only,” with exception of the “OPT only,” do not count toward a county’s enrollment goal.

JoEllen Mitchell suggested KYAE develop regional meeting handouts clearly identifying when the various changes go into effect.

Lisa Stethen asked where the Kentucky Employability Certificate (KEC) and the Kentucky Manufacturing Skills Standards (KMSS) certificate fell into the new workplace education strategy.



It was noted, if the KEC is funded through the Workforce Alliance, the KEC students will not count toward the county's enrollment goal.

Cris Crowley noted the condition that 75 percent of a workplace class be eligible for adult education services and asked what to do with the 25 percent not eligible for adult education services.

KYAE still wants to be responsive to economic development partners and business and industry, but we are not challenged to chase them. The program should serve the 25 percent not eligible, but they should not be enrolled in AERIN and they do not count toward the county's enrollment goal.

Kathryn Hardman asked if computer literacy was ever going to be recognized as a NRS basic skill such as reading.

Reecie Stagnolia asked if computer literacy skills move the state's education needle. David Walters added that, with our limited funding resources, we cannot be a social service agency, but we do want to equip those who are eligible for adult education services with skills like computer literacy integrated with academic skills.

Cris Crowley asked if KYAE was going to tell partner agencies of the changes and help local programs deal with possible public relations fallout.

Kathryn Hardman advised she has individuals line up each month to take computer courses, but if she has to discontinue or limit those who may take the class, it will be a disappointment to the community and impact public relations.

JoEllen Mitchell asked if homework time would still be allowed. Janet Hoover confirmed that the NRS homework definition hasn't changed.

Julie Scoskie asked that KYAE develop common talking points for local programs to use when talking with partner agencies – OET, WIA, Vocational Rehabilitation, local governments, community-based services, businesses, KCTCS, etc. – about system changes.

Sarah Hawker confirmed KYAE will provide communication tools. We want adult education to be recognized as a strong program that is part of the state's educational system and not the "catch all" for other needs.

Kathryn Hardman indicated she would like to have her entire staff attend the regional meeting to hear this message.

### **Performance Funding**

Terry Pruitt reminded members that 84 counties received incentives for 2005-06 performance, but Kentucky did not qualify for incentive funds. This led KYAE to look at

the performance funding policy. The new performance funding approach will be two pronged.

The first prong, program performance, is based upon overall program accomplishments. The current system requires programs to meet the enrollment goal and 50 percent, 60 percent, or 70 percent of the county's performance goals to earn "incentives." Under the new system, a program must meet the enrollment goal and we will bump up the minimum to 70 percent of the county's performance goals to qualify for performance funding.

JoEllen Mitchell noted she has learned to strategize and use data but many programs don't understand how to read and use data. Julie Scoskie concurred and requested AERIN be enhanced to provide trend data and suggested counties be allowed to give input on future AERIN enhancements.

Reecie Stagnolia indicated KYAE is continuing to look at where we move AERIN in order to capture data from the policy changes, streamline enrollment codes and build a data warehouse in order to produce trend data.

Julie Scoskie asked if the state's NRS performance goals are changing.

Bev Thomson asked if Kentucky's failure to meet the state performance goals could be the result of having Kentucky goal percentages above the national averages.

Reecie Stagnolia confirmed Kentucky had performed very highly in the past and OVAE has kept raising the bar. OVAE is focused on continuous improvement and allows states to set a goal of one percent above the previous year's goal or the previous year's result, whichever was higher. KYAE received word in the past few days that OVAE has accepted our negotiated performance goals, but the goals will not be final until the Secretary of Education approves them.

Terry Pruitt noted since the state didn't meet certain performance goals, it does give us the opportunity to set more realistic goals for those categories.

Bev Thomson requested KYAE include information in the common talking points to help local program staff explain why Kentucky didn't meet the goals.

Sugar Willey asked that KYAE provide information to help programs explain to other funding agencies why the enrollment numbers and goals are decreasing.

Sugar Willey said ESL is a priority in Woodford County and noted KAELI has been working to enhance professional development opportunities to help counties increase ESL numbers. If we're thinking about statewide capacity building and some program directors elect not to offer ESL services, will the ESL need be met?

Reecie Stagnolia noted since Kentucky didn't meet the ESL Level 1 goal last year, KYAE proposed a goal next year of 38 percent of those enrolled in ESL Level 1 completing Level 1, and OVAE has accepted it.

Julie Scoskie requested NRS performance targets be shared with local programs before the regional meetings. She suggested Kentucky is suffering from the law of unintentional consequences and funding has not kept pace with aggressive program goals. She added we need to stay more focused in our efforts to get quality outcomes.

Terry Pruitt told the committee that student performance is prong two of the new performance funding policy. Student performance is not tied to overall program performance. Programs will get credit for GEDs earned, level completions, and other student achievements. He reminded members that KYAE is not setting county GED or transition goals this year, but as we continue to look at the data and if we don't achieve the CPE goals, KYAE will consider setting county GED and transition goals.

As noted earlier, the Enrollment and Outcome Workgroup will be working to determine what counts and for how much under student performance.

Julie Scoskie suggested KYAE share information with programs on the CPE GED and transition goals and what each county's share of the goal would be if county goals were mandated.

Sarah Hawker asked members to keep discussions relating to the new framework within the group for now. KYAE wants the opportunity to share the information first-hand at the regional meetings. She thanked members for their invaluable feedback.

Cris Crowley noted as good as the new direction sounds, it isn't going to be easy. Staff have been pushed and trained to go in one direction. It will be a challenge to retrain and refocus efforts, and although she appreciates the lower enrollment goal, when looking at the fact that "assessments only" won't count, it isn't going to be easy.

Terry Pruitt noted of the 37,000 people served in NRS levels in 2001, an estimated 10,000 of NRS Level 1 didn't stay for the required 12 hours, but were close. Of the 44,000 assessments in 2006, 24,000 were "assessment only" and 20,000 were enrolled in the program, but not long-term. Reecie Stagnolia reiterated we need to focus our attention on plugging the holes in the education pipeline.

Rocky Wallace praised KYAE leadership for listening to those in the trenches. He reported many times being discouraged with bureaucracy and noted the culture KYAE leadership is modeling is very impressive.

Sarah Hawker said it has been invigorating to get in touch with doing something well instead of doing something a lot and thanked KYAE staff and providers for going on the journey with her. She added it is better to tell someone about the multiple education gains students have made rather than how many people we served.

Julie Scoskie asked if the professional development allocation would be separate from core service funding.

Terry Pruitt confirmed it would be separate.

Julie Scoskie said local programs would need a lot of professional development on new models.

Sarah Hawker advised KYAE is currently negotiating next year's contracts with KIFL, the Adult Education Academy for Professional Development and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development for our new professional development needs.

Sugar Willey and Bill Teegarden made an appeal to resurrect program director training through the PD Academy.

Bill Bates noted the ability to offer professional development within his own program was invaluable.

### **Meeting Evaluation**

The group was asked to fill out evaluation forms and sign expense vouchers before leaving.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is June 1, 2007.